

The Governor's Special Commission on  
**Maryland**  
**State Parks**

**RECEIVED**

JAN 24 2001

MARYLAND STATE ARCHIVES

# *vision*

To maximize the benefits of the State Parks for citizens of all ages, and effectively preserve and promote the parks for the benefit of future generations of all *Marylanders*.



*A report to the Governor*

**Fall 2000**



## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3-7
Maryland's Magnificent State Parks.....	8
High-Value Benefits of Maryland's State Parks.....	9
Trends Affecting Maryland's State Parks.....	15
Current Funding of Maryland's State Parks.....	19
Recommendations.....	23
Governor's Special Commission.....	31





*6 parks have man  
made lakes*

### **Recommendation 3.**

*Ensure that the SFPS has the necessary people, organization, systems, and tools to maximize the benefits of the state parks.*

The State Forest and Park Service should continue its emphasis on development of its workforce. That is its greatest asset and its best means for fulfilling its highly significant mission. The state parks system would benefit from a more balanced selection of park managers.

**Strategies include:**

- ✓ **Revise the organizational structure.**
- ✓ **Establish employee competencies.**
- ✓ **Reorganize staffing to strengthen focus on interpretation.**
- ✓ **Establish a funded partnership to implement interpretive programs.**
- ✓ **Create additional permanent interpretive staffing.**

### **Recommendation 4.**

*Expand and strengthen outreach programs*

Recently the State Forest and Park Service has met with moderate success in reaching out to area businesses, local governments and community groups for financial and volunteer support. A more concentrated and coordinated effort should be initiated.

**Strategies include:**

- ✓ **Find and work with existing organizations.**
- ✓ **Establish advisory committees.**
- ✓ **Increase involvement of state park "Friends" and volunteer organizations.**
- ✓ **Undertake a study on the potential for a center for the disabled and others with special needs.**
- ✓ **Develop Initiatives to educate the general public, administration and the legislature.**

### **Recommendation 5.**

*Market the state parks*

The marketing of certain state parks and forests would have multiple economic, environmental and social benefits for Maryland's citizens and visitors. Three target markets have been identified for an advertising and public relations campaign.

**Heritage Tourism,  
Nature Tourism, and  
Cultural Tourism.**



## Recommendation 6.

*Fund Maryland state parks consistently, fairly and in perpetuity*

The services at state parks are steadily declining, and in large part only the dedication of employees and volunteers have kept the State Forest and Park Service functional at a reasonably high level during the past ten years. The decline is reaching the point where sheer dedication can no longer overcome the obstacles created by lack of funding. The Commission asks the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly to provide **full funding** to meet the needs of the state forests and parks and to enable a dedicated revenue source to be developed to provide a **continuing funding** source for the parks.

Additional funding initiatives should also be explored.

Strategies include:

- ✓ Create a Trust Fund.
- ✓ Add to the State Lottery.
- ✓ Create Revenue Generators.
- ✓ Revise Program Open Space.
- ✓ Establish Matching Funds.
- ✓ Revise the Special Fund Budget Formula.

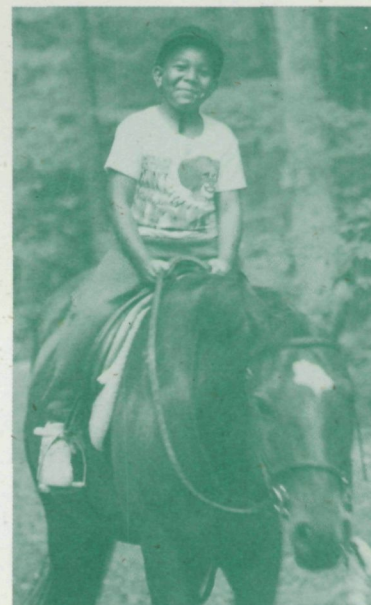
## Recommendation 7.

*Establish a permanent State Parks Commission*

The Commission should report to the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and should be charged to provide visionary advice and counsel. State parks must be thoughtfully planned and designed to harmonize with their settings, and preserve the ecological, biological, scenic, cultural, and historical resources so precious to Marylanders present and future.

The seven recommendations are intended to protect our ecological, biological, scenic, historical, and cultural resources for all Marylanders, present and future. Maryland's state parks, our crown jewels, are under pressure, under-staffed and under-funded. The Commission's recommendations are in response to this reality.

*1 natural  
resource area is an  
active horse track*





*1 park has towering  
cliffs containing  
fossils from the  
Miocene period*

## THE HIGH-VALUE BENEFITS OF *M*ARYLAND'S STATE PARKS.

In protecting and providing safe access to significant ecological, biological, scenic, historical, and cultural places, our state parks

- ✓ Provide an enriching environment for people and communities.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for education of people of all ages
- ✓ Protect our remaining natural landscapes, streams, and forests.
- ✓ Protect our native wildlife, and vegetation.
- ✓ Protect historic and cultural structures and landscapes.
- ✓ Stimulate the local and statewide economy.

## TRENDS AFFECTING

### *M*ARYLAND'S STATE PARKS:

Although the parks are servicing more people who are doing more things, more frequently for longer periods of time, the financial, human and physical resources of the parks is dwindling.

#### The Ten Year Trend in the Human, Financial and Physical Resources Available to Maryland State Forests and Parks

1990	2000
average vehicle age - 3 years	average vehicle age - 10 years
243,700 acres	260,600 acres
7,600,000 visitors	10,000,000 visitors (1999)
\$2,679,646 to employ seasonal staff (min. wage \$3.80)	\$1,695,631 to employ seasonals (min. wage \$5.15)
30 forest and park managers	21 forest and park managers
220 Rangers	175 Rangers
Budget 75% tax (.19% of state budget)	Budget 60% tax (.17% of state budget)
DNR 1.6% of the state budget.	DNR 1.07% of the state budget.
SFPS raised \$6,139,876	SFPS must raise \$13,400,000
SFPS received about \$40,000 in donations.	received \$485,000 in donations.
0 "Friends" organizations	25 "Friends" organizations.
SFPS had 154 volunteers.	11,638 volunteers.



# SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS OF *M*ARYLAND STATE PARKS

## Sources of Funds:

General funds	\$24,309,987
Reimbursable funds	\$184,446
Federal funds	\$2,051,750
Special funds	\$13,706,327
Total	\$40,252,510

## Uses of Funds:

Classified Salaries	\$22,399,763
Contractual Services	\$4,602,712
Pass Through Grants and Subsidies	\$3,434,330
Special and Technical Fees	\$3,219,668
Utilities	\$2,439,884
Supplies and Materials	\$2,173,207
Motor Vehicles	\$1,356,576
Communications	\$311,355
Fixed Charges	\$118,989
Equipment	\$79,578
Travel	\$55,098



*1 park has old  
growth forest*



# Maryland's Magnificent State parks...

## Our CROWN JEWELS

*Nearly all Maryland parks have Native American archeological sites*

The Maryland Board of Forestry, forerunner of the SFPS system of today, began in 1906, some ten years before the founding of the National Park Service. The state parks are Maryland's legacy of ecological, biological, scenic, cultural and historical resources. Maryland state parks stretch from Atlantic beaches across the Coastal Plain, the Piedmont, the Blue Ridge, to the Appalachian Highlands.

Our parklands also provide the people of Maryland with a sense of tranquillity, solitude, and relaxation. Visiting the parks can instill an ethic of stewardship towards the resources that comprise the Maryland state forest and park system.

Today, parks preserve open space and help communities grow "smart." The Maryland Office of Planning predicts that if growth trends in Maryland do not change, the state will consume as much land for development in Central Maryland alone over the next 25 years as it has in the entire 350 year history of the State. The importance of state parks will increase proportionately with the pressures of development. Our parks safeguard existing structures and landscapes, protecting the unique heritage and natural surroundings of long-standing Maryland communities. The protection of wetlands and floodplains within our parks ensures the integrity of natural processes that reduce the potential for floods. Our parks protect threatened and endangered species and resources such as wildlife habitat, clean air and water, and the natural historical and cultural heritage of the state. *Our state parks are Maryland's Crown Jewels.*





# The High-Value Benefits of Maryland's State Parks.

*If the formation of the National Park System is referred to as the "best idea America ever had," then the formation of state park systems must be the "best idea that individual states ever had."*

## Maryland State Parks:

- ✓ Provide an enriching environment for people and communities.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for education of people of all ages.
- ✓ Protect our remaining natural landscapes, streams, and forests.
- ✓ Protect our native wildlife, and vegetation.
- ✓ Protect historic and cultural structures and landscapes.
- ✓ Stimulate Maryland's economy.

## Maryland State Parks:

### ✓ *Provide an enriching environment for people and communities*

At the 1999 Convention of the National Association of State Park Directors, it was put forth that the positive effects of parks on people and their families are far reaching. Based on the assumption that sharing leisure time and activities is essential for building and maintaining strong, healthy family relationships - parks are an ideal setting. Parks can do more than provide a connection between people and nature. Parks provide a place for families to be together and participate in myriad activities.

As park visitation increases, people in the parks will encounter other visitors more frequently, and may experience greater opportunities for culturally diverse contacts. Whether it is the elderly, the young, the physically or mentally challenged, or varying ethnic backgrounds, these informal social interactions can help break down cultural barriers and isolation - and encourage acceptance.

Social consciousness has brought about initiatives to improve the quality of life for those with disabilities. The state parks provide spaces for people of all abilities to enjoy.

High quality planning and development proves that communities with a strong recreational component are sought after places to live. Parks are often the cornerstones for community growth and civic pride. Communities show their value for state parks in many ways, one of which is strong volunteer involvement. A community's commitment to parks can be a foundation for involvement in other causes. As people in volunteer



*1 park has the only  
undisturbed serpentine  
barren in Maryland*



*1 park has an  
Olympic sized  
swimming pool  
on a mountain-top*



groups see that together they can make a difference, they gain a sense of the greater good and learn how to affect change.

Parks provide places for recreation. They can be the substitute for the "no place to go, and nothing to do syndrome." Studies show that communities with active recreation programs see a reduction in crime.

The value of a natural, or historic environment must not be underestimated. As human beings, we have the capacity to be emotionally moved by our senses. We gaze at a spectacular sunset, a glistening lake, and a sky full of stars. We listen to the honk of over-flying geese and take in the scent of pine. A community that includes sufficient open space truly offers an enriching human environment.

Large tracts of open space that feature recreational amenities are the realm of state parks. State parks generally offer more space than local parks, but unlike most national parks, are close enough to home for anyone who seeks convenient outdoor pleasures. While maintaining statewide appeal, state parks accommodate the specific demands of a local community. People who seek the recreation and scenery of state parks place a high value on these resources. Yet as obvious as the value of state parks is, financial support for our state parks is diminishing.

### *Maryland State Parks:*

#### *✓ Provide opportunities for education of people of all ages*

Maryland's state forests and parks collectively serve as a giant "classroom without walls" over 260,000 acres in size, that can provide each of Maryland's 5.1 million residents with lifelong learning opportunities focusing on the unique ecological, biological, scenic, cultural and historical resources of our state.

Maryland's system of state parks includes areas in five physiographic regions representing seventeen habitat types. Sites ranging from the prehistoric to the postmodern encompass Maryland's cultural heritage.

Learning opportunities offered by the state parks include formal programs, informal experiences through staff contacts of varying intensities, and access to visual and written information through exhibits, publications, videos, and web pages. Over 2 million people annually participate in these programs and activities. In addition to the formal programs noted above, many "virtual" visitors are learning about the state parks and their resources through the Department of Natural Resources web site. Over 1 million "hits" per month are recorded to the web site, with 14,500 requests for public land information generated per month.



## Overview of Existing Education Programs

In 1994, the State Forest and Park Service published *Your Guide to Outdoor Education Programs, Camps and Events*, a menu of programs and activities offered by the Service. While several years old now, this guide still serves as an accurate, if unwieldy, listing of programs available.

The *Your Guide to Outdoor Education Programs, Camps and Events* reveals a great variety of programs, far more than most members of the general public are aware. Most of these programs take place within the state parks, many on a seasonal basis, while others are conducted off-site. Surprisingly, statistics on visitor use of these programs are not currently coordinated at the agency level, but are tracked only by individual parks.

General programs include campfire programs, wildlife viewing, slide programs and roving interpretive programs. An estimated 250,000 visitors participate each year in these activities.

**Environmental Education** Programs feature some of the most popular and highly visible efforts such as:

- ✓ Junior Rangers (2,285 participants).
- ✓ Scales and Tales (1,250 programs/displays to 200,00 participants).
- ✓ Park Pals (1,058 preschoolers).
- ✓ Outdoor Education Study (4,500 Allegany County school children).
- ✓ Days Cove and Soldiers Delight Environmental Study (5,230 Baltimore County school children).

**Cultural Programs** focus on living history and other interpretive media as techniques to connect park visitors to historical aspects of the state parks. In 1998, living history presentations were given to 14,655 visitors with an additional estimated 300,000 people at the Maryland State Fair, local fairs and community events, and Fort Frederick demonstrations.

**Recreational Programs** fall under the State Forest and Park Service Outdoor Adventures program and feature canoe trips, back-country hikes, mountain biking events and personal water-craft activities (1998 attendance for all programs was 5,658). Although focused on active outdoor recreation, most activities include an educational component and opportunities for skill development.

**Youth Programs** include residential and day camp opportunities for youth ages 8 to 15. The Outdoor Discovery Camp provides basic educational camps, specialty camps in rock climbing, adventure sports, and leadership (800 participants in 1999). Day camps include those at North Point State Park (200 children/year), Janes Island State Park (25/year), and Tawes Garden (125/year).

*1 park has a lodge*



## 1907

Patapsco Forest Reserve established through a gift of land to the state.



*1 park was the site  
of the race  
between a horse and  
the first steam  
engine in America*



**Visitor Protection Programs** educate visitors on outdoor hazards. Park Watch, hunter safety, preventive search and rescue, water safety, and camper safety programs have reached approximately 15,000 visitors.

**Special Events** allow the State Forest and Park Service to reach a larger audience (including those who might otherwise never visit a state park or be aware of the educational opportunities). These include programs and activities at the State Fair and Baltimore Waterfront Festival (1999 attendance at the latter was 250,00).

Exposing children throughout their academic careers to state parks and historic sites can significantly impact their attitudes towards protection and conservation of natural resources. The State Forest and Park Service educational programs are our best available method of fostering environmental sensitivity and responsibility.

*The learning opportunities currently offered by the state parks are numerous and far reaching, but are not fully utilized. They are under funded, and at their current levels, do not meet the goals described in the recommendations of the report.*

### **Maryland State Parks:**

- ✓ **Protect our remaining natural landscapes, streams, and forests**
- ✓ **Protect our native wildlife and vegetation**

Our state parks contain the majority of the best and most representative examples of the state's ecological, biological, scenic, cultural and historical resources. State parks embody the highly commendable actions the state has taken to safeguard our remaining "un-sprawled" lands.

Overuse, habitat fragmentation, and loss of natural areas have damaged our ability to enjoy the outdoors and threaten many of our wildlife and plant resources. The continuing decline of important non-consumptive recreation opportunities and the degradation of environmentally sensitive areas have created a deep sense of loss among many Marylanders. There is an undercurrent of frustration about our inability to experience natural settings, enjoy our abundance of wildlife, access unspoiled lands, or be enriched by a trip through a beautiful natural area. State parks offer beautiful scenery, clean air, pleasant surroundings, tranquillity and solitude; things that help counter the stress of everyday life. Even non-users can enjoy a state park simply by knowing that it is there.

The natural aspects of our state parks make each one unique. Our parks protect native air, water, soils and vegetation. They provide space for families and gatherings; they are the pride of our communities, and simply put, they are where we look as the sun sets.



Acre by acre, year by year, we are converting our treasured open space to urban and suburban uses. How we protect state parks and open space today will determine in large part how our children and future generations relate to the natural world.

## Maryland State Parks:

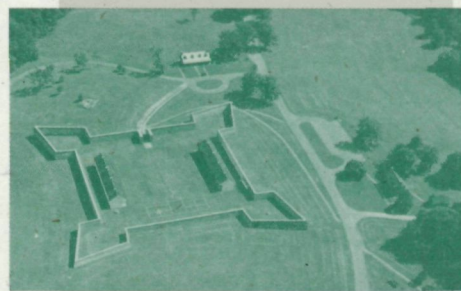
### ✓ *Protect historic and cultural buildings and sites*

Historical and cultural resources located in Maryland state parks are significant to Marylanders of diverse cultural backgrounds. Places and objects of historical and cultural interest can inspire a sense of awe in the beholder. Once visitors understand why a resource is significant in their lives, they become stakeholders in its protection. By exposing all Marylanders to the individual features of our diverse cultural heritage, we encourage them to appreciate the broader cultural tapestry that unites the people of our state and nation. Historical and cultural resources in State Parks illustrate the human history in our state, from the time of Native Peoples through modern environmentalism. As Marylanders realize the cultural and historic treasures within our state parks, they become advocates for resource protection. Protecting our history and culture promotes cultural pride among Marylanders, and helps people of diverse backgrounds to appreciate and respect each other.

Because historical and cultural sites and objects are so precious, proper care and management of public use is critical. These places and things are a vast outdoor museum of state history, and must be maintained as such. Maryland school children can especially benefit from these opportunities by the forging of better partnerships between parks and schools.

In addition to being an educational resource, our historic and cultural resources can promote economic development in Maryland. Heritage Tourism is one of the most lucrative segments of the tourist industry. Heritage tourists stay longer, engage more expensive accommodations, and spend more money than any other discrete segment of the domestic leisure traveling public. Right now, four of the five Maryland Product Development Initiatives offered by the Maryland Office of Tourism involve historical topics (the War of 1812, the Civil War, the National Road, and Multicultural Tourism). The state parks have historical and cultural resources relating to all four of these initiatives.

The fifth Product Development Initiative, Nature Tourism, is actively being developed with state parks' involvement. Because most of human history was determined by natural resources at peoples' disposal, Nature Tourism and Heritage Tourism go hand-in-hand.



*1 park has the largest, English-built stone fort of the French and Indian War*

## 1912

Twelve acres of Patapsco is open to the public, creating Maryland's first state park.



*1 forest has  
shale barrens*

## Maryland State Parks:

### ✓ Stimulate Maryland's economy

Adventure, Nature and Heritage Tourism are the fastest growing segments of the tourism industry. Our state parks are untapped, undeveloped resources that can help to produce significant economic benefits to the state and communities surrounding the parks. Our state parks already play a vital role in attracting visitors. State parks attract out-of-state visitors and encourage in-state travel by residents bringing tourism dollars into the state's economy. As low-impact tourism grows in popularity, the sales of recreation related goods and services will depend upon attractive and accessible recreation land and facilities.

Even though only a small portion of tourism dollars is actually spent in parks, the impact of state parks on the state and local economies is substantial. Tourism dollars are spent at nearby private businesses for gas, food, lodging and other goods and services. **Studies have shown that for each dollar budgeted for a park there is a ten-fold return to the local economy.**

Parks, facilities and programs that are attractive to visitors are an essential ingredient of the tourism industry. Many travelers visit SFSP visitor centers, galleries/museums, historic sites, conservation areas and waterfront parks.

Parks and recreation services can play an economic development role by attracting industry to an area. When companies choose to establish or relocate their business, the availability of recreation, parks and open spaces is frequently high on the priority list for site selection.

Business and economic development agencies cite numerous examples in different states and communities that support quality of life as the main factor in recruiting businesses. Quality of life considerations can include convenient access to natural settings; recreational and cultural opportunities and open space; greenways, rivers and trails located in and adjacent to communities.





## Trends Affecting

### Maryland's State Parks:

As the state forest and park system continues to grow in acreage and visitation, its financial, human and physical resources continue to dwindle. The state financial support falls 40% short of minimum funding; vehicles and equipment are aging and failing, and there are fewer employees in the parks than there were in 1990. Development and urbanization of surrounding communities has brought social, political, and resource pressure on our parks never before experienced. Even though the number of people employed by the system has fallen dramatically over the last ten years the scope of responsibility has increased. Now, in addition to managing the ever-growing acreage of the forests and parks, park managers must cope with marinas, fishing piers, swimming pools and visitor centers. They must also generate 40% of the park's operating revenue.

The management and jurisdiction of the parks is the responsibility of civilian and law enforcement staff operating under two separate systems. Concerned citizens have responded to the obvious shortfall in the state's ability to manage and fund the vast holdings of the park system by forming "Friends" groups to partner with parks.

#### Critical Trends:

- ✓ Increasing number and diversity of visitors.
- ✓ Increasing acreage and recreation facilities.
- ✓ Increasing visitation by people with disabilities.
- ✓ Decreasing labor pool.
- ✓ Decreasing funding for environmental and outdoor education responsibilities.
- ✓ Decreasing equipment viability.
- ✓ Increasing pressure to maximize revenue generation.
- ✓ Increasing high-impact user stress on natural resources.
- ✓ Increasing pressure to reduce its dependency on general tax funds.
- ✓ Increasing dependency on communication and information technology.
- ✓ Increasing criminal violations.
- ✓ Increasing need for Ranger wilderness search and rescue operations.
- ✓ Increasing need to manage hunting on parklands.
- ✓ Increasing citizen support.

Indeed, an overarching trend is the widening and deepening of the problems, issues, and challenges confronting the management of public parks not just in Maryland, but throughout the country.

*1 park is the site of the landing of the first Maryland colonists*

#### 1933

The Civilian Conservation Corps, working with state forest officials, develop public recreational facilities at park areas in state forests.



*1 park was the  
home of Maryland's  
highest ranking  
officer in the  
Revolutionary War*

## Major changes Maryland State Forests and Parks in the past decade

1990	2000
average vehicle age - 3 years	average vehicle age - 10 years
243,700 acres	260,600 acres
7,600,000 visitors	10,000,000 visitors (1999)
\$2,679,646 to employ seasonally (min. wage \$3.80)	\$1,695,631 to employ seasonally (min. wage \$5.15)
30 forest and park managers	21 forest and park managers
220 Rangers	175 Rangers
Budget 75% tax (.19% of state budget)	Budget 60% tax (.17% of state budget)
DNR 1.6% of the state budget.	DNR 1.07% of the state budget.
SFPS raised \$6,139,876	SFPS must raise \$13,400,000
SFPS received about \$40,000 in donations.	received \$485,000 in donations.
0 "Friends" organizations	25 "Friends" organizations.
SFPS had 154 volunteers.	11,638 volunteers.

## General Trends Affecting the Future of The Parks

Research shows that development will increase more in the central region in the next 25 years than it has in the previous 350 years.

Marylanders, like the population in general, are changing. We are more and more culturally diverse and urbanized.

Our leisure time is becoming more precious as we work harder and are becoming more affluent. Traveling is becoming easier and cheaper. Highways take us where ever we want to go. We are getting older, and our needs are changing. By early in this century, grandparents in the United States will outnumber grandchildren. As we age, we are increasingly health conscious, and seek outdoor recreation. In fact federal, state, and local governments are making significant efforts to promote outdoor activity as part of public health initiatives.

## Visitor Trends Affecting the Future of the Parks

*The parks are servicing more people who are doing more things, more frequently for longer periods of time.*

The great increase in the number and variety of park visitors has created two kinds of conflicts. There are conflicts between visitors. For instance, anglers are in conflict with boaters. Boaters are in conflict with bathers. Bikers are in conflict with hikers. Hikers are in conflict with equestrians.



On the other hand, there are also conflicts between the park resources and the visitors. Some activities are "high-impact" such as mountain biking, off-road vehicle use and jet skiing. There is competition for facilities on weekends, holidays, April through October, and for weather related activities. Other conflicts occur during certain mandated times for activities such as hunting. As people increase their visits to the parks into the traditional light use seasons, there is greater stress on staff, particularly after seasonal help departs. As visitation increases, the park system must cope with escalating challenges. The incident of crime and violence within the parks is increasing. Parks must be equally accessible to all people. Parks must accommodate and balance myriad uses. In short, visitors are increasing and deepening the human imprint on the natural and cultural resources protected by the state park system.

Visitation trends will force changes to occur within the parks. Even today, some state parks fill to capacity during weekends and holidays. Very soon, the visitor population must be able to move easily from their homes to the parks and from one park to another. Far reaching ideas include; integrating park and open space needs to every level of planning and development, linking parks together with green corridors and trails, and linking transportation systems with parks.

Nature tourism is on the rise everywhere, and Maryland parks are no exception. There is great opportunity to take advantage of life-long learning, a milder form of nature tourism favored by a significant portion of the aging population. On the other hand, a significant portion of the population prefers high-impact, high intensity activities like operating off-road vehicles.

Considering these irrevocable trends, the Service will be forced to balance the uses, conflicts, and visitors with the protection of our natural and cultural resources.

*Other conflicts will become more critical:*

**Resource management vs. visitor preference -**

The public may have philosophical differences with DNR as it manages its natural resources using practices such as timber cutting or hunting.

**Extreme activities -**

As new sports become popular the respective responsibilities of the Department, visitors and outfitters need to be defined. Wind-surfing, rock climbing, flying and landing ultra-light airplanes, and surfing all require personal responsibility of the participants, yet DNR often becomes involved in search and rescue operations as a result of such activities.

*1 park has the  
nation's first  
completed  
monument to  
George Washington*



## 1942

Joseph Kaylor, Maryland's second State Forester, improves recreational facilities and establishes state parks in stream valleys to safeguard water quality.



### **Adjacent community conflict -**

Communities near or adjacent to state parks often have a strong vested interest in the activities permitted in state parks while state agencies often take a broader statewide approach to decision making. Fairs, festivals, and deer hunts are examples of areas of local interest.

### **Private sector influence -**

As the demand for service and access increases, the parks increasingly rely on private support. As SFPS increases the use of sponsorships, donations and volunteers the Maryland Department of Natural resources must be sensitive to the impacts of commercialization and undue influence on decision making around protection of the natural resources.

In short, visitor expectations are greater than ever and increasing. People want more service, more programs, more facilities, more activities, more access, and more opportunities to maximize their leisure time park experience. At the same time *the human, financial and physical resources available to the parks have been declining steadily for ten years.*



*3 parks have  
restored grist  
mills*



## Current Funding of Maryland State Parks (FY2000)

The State Forest and Park Service is funded from four separate sources:

1. General funds	\$24,309,987
2. Reimbursable funds	\$184,446
3. Federal funds	\$2,051,750
4. Special funds	\$13,706,327
Total	\$40,252,510

1. **General Funds** (\$24,309,987) constitute the majority of the funding for the Service covering roughly 60% of the operating budget for the Service, and .17% of the total State operating budget. The General Funds support the classified employees and the Maryland Environmental Service charges.

2. **Reimbursable Funds** (\$184,446) hold money received from other state agencies. This money is normally earmarked for a specific purpose and has little or no impact on the operating dollars for the state forest and park system. The Sideling Hill Visitors Center uses reimbursable funds to help with day to day operations. Reimbursable funds support the Trails Grant program and also pay for the Maryland Conservation Corps scrap tire removal efforts.

3. **Federal Funds** (\$2,051,750) are used to support the Americorps program. This program provides job opportunities to fifty 18-25 year olds. Based on the concept of the CCC program during 1920s, young people receive job skills training while performing work that enhances the environment. This funding also supports an urban part of the program by providing funds to Community Year and Civic Works.

4. **Special Funds** (\$13,706,327) represent that portion of the budget derived from charges visitors pay to use our forest and park facilities. Maryland has directed all the money be returned to the facilities where the money is raised.

### **Forest and Park Reserve Fund** - (\$9,216,989)

This fund is the most general of all the reserve funds. The majority of the revenues are deposited into this fund. The money can be used for any expenditures related to the operation of the state's forests and parks. Maryland counties that contain a state park receive a portion of the Forest and Park Reserve Fund's total revenue. All receive at least 15%, while two, Garrett and Allegany, receive 25%.

*2 parks are where  
the British marched  
to burn*

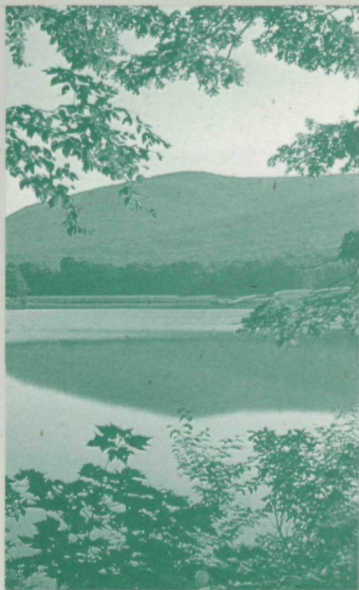
*Washington and  
attack Baltimore*



## 1954

Renewed emphasis on acquisition of new park areas.





*6 parks are sites  
important to  
African-American  
history.*

***Forest and Park Concession Fund* - (\$1,431,296)**

All revenue earned from the concession programs in the parks is deposited into this fund. Any profits can be returned to the general operation of the state forest and park system. It is subject to the same percentage of county appropriations. The appropriations are based on net profit not total revenue.

***Deep Creek Lake Reserve Fund* - (\$312,800)**

Private land owners around Deep Creek Lake pay for docks and lake access. The money is credited to the Deep Creek Lake Reserve Fund, and must be used for the operation and maintenance of the lake. Recently, the law creating this reserve was changed to provide 25% of all this revenue to be appropriated by Garrett County.

***Fair Hill Reserve Fund* - (\$640,100)**

All revenues generated by Fairhill in Cecil County must be returned to Fair Hill.

***Fort Washington Marina Reserve Fund* - (\$55,195)**

All revenues generated by the marina in Prince George's County must be returned to Fort Washington.

***Somers Cove Reserve Fund* - (\$550,975)**

The Somers Cove marina is located in Crisfield. Its operating budget is based on the revenues it generates. This reserve fund holds revenue to cover the operating expenses of the marina.

***Off Road Vehicle Fund* - (16,428)**

The revenue generated from the selling of off road vehicle permits is used to maintain and create trails.

***Property Maintenance Fund* - (\$289,851)**

Revenue earned at the Natural Environmental Areas and the Natural Resource Management Areas are deposited into this fund. This revenue must be returned to the operation of areas that contribute to this fund.

***Waterway Improvement Fund* - (\$247,663)**

This fund is not specific to the Service. Since many boat launching ramps are located in our state parks, some of the money from this fund is used to help maintain ramps.

***Program Open Space Fund* - (\$945,030)**

By law the State Forest and Park Service can receive up to \$1.2 million per year of Program Open Space funds to support the operation of the state forests and parks. Originally, this law was created to purchase open space land using funds received from the transfer tax on the sale of a house. It was later changed to allow funding for facility development.



## Use of the Funds:

The State Forest and Park Service utilizes all the general, federal, reimbursable and special funds to provide the operating budget of the Service. These funds are divided between seven different programs, with a variety of operational projects in each. The complexity and type of facilities, acreage and visitation determine the funding for each of the projects. The following is a list of the types of uses of these funds.

### ***Classified Salaries (\$22,399,763)***

This money pays for the salaries of the 379 permanent professional staff that manage the state forest and park system. All fringe benefits including social security, retirements, health insurance, unemployment compensation and overtime payments are part of these expenses.

### ***Special and Technical Fees (\$3,219,668)***

This money is for hiring of seasonal employees. Because of heavy attendance during a limited part of the year, the Service hires many seasonal employees to help with the larger crowds. The types of employees hired during this time period are lifeguards, contact station attendants, summer maintenance crews, concession employees, technicians, office assistance and seasonal naturalists.

### ***Communications (\$311,355)***

Expenses for postage and telephone are covered in this area.

### ***Travel (\$55,098)***

The majority of this money covers all routine instate travel. Out of state meetings and conferences are also covered in this fund.

### ***Utilities (\$2,439,884)***

All expenses for electric, fuel oil and gas usage are included. The Maryland Environmental Service is responsible for all of the water and sewer treatment facilities in our forest and park facilities. The Service pays them \$1.6 million a year to provide this service.

### ***Motor Vehicle (\$1,356,576)***

All expenses for watercraft, untagged and licensed motor vehicles are covered by this money. These include gasoline/oil, maintenance, purchase, lease, and insurance costs.

### ***Contractual Services (\$4,602,712)***

This money covers technical and specialized repairs to buildings and grounds. Other services that require specialized equipment, where it is not feasible or practical for the Service to purchase, are included in these charges. The Park Improvement Program funds are also included in this area of the budget.

*1 park has an iron  
furnace from the  
1800's and the ru-  
ins of the iron  
master's home.*

## 1961-1967

A special Commission of State Forests and Parks is established to make long-term recommendations for the development of state park facilities to meet the growing public demand for outdoor recreational opportunities.



### ***Supplies and Materials (\$2,173,207)***

This money covers supplies for visitor services. Toilet paper, cleaning supplies, building repair parts, promotional items, interpretive materials, office supplies, fertilizer and lime, small tools, concession resale items, ammunition and gasoline and oil for resale are the types of expenditures in this category.

### ***Equipment Additional and Replacement (\$79,578)***

Table saws, jointers, automotive analyzers, other shop equipment, computers, radios, concession food preparation items, lawn mowers, cabin furniture, stoves, beds, grills are but a few of the many types of equipment that are necessary to operate forests and parks. Parks complete many of the repairs and maintenance projects to the buildings and grounds, and this type of equipment is necessary to perform that work.

### ***Pass Through Grants and Subsidies (\$3,434,330)***

The forests and parks are required by law to grant a portion of the revenues they earn to the counties. Since state lands are not on the county tax roles, the Service annually returns \$1.7 million to the counties where the money is earned, in lieu of those property taxes. Federal pass through funding for the Civil Works and Community Year portion of the Americorps Grant (1.5mm) is in this area of the budget.

### ***Fixed Charges (\$118,989)***

Insurance premiums for boats, facility damage, boiler/machinery are a requirement of the State and must be funded by the Service. In addition, any rents which the Service pays are in this category.

*1 park has the  
stone quarries from  
which the  
Smithsonian  
Institution "castle"  
was built.*

## **1961-1967**

Governor J. Millard Tawes creates a Parks Division within the Department of State Forests and Parks.



## Recommendations for the Protection and Stewardship of Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources.

The state must commit to preservation and protection of our ecological, biological, scenic, cultural and historical resources. Program Open Space funds are used to acquire ever increasing acreage to manage. Our existing forests and parks are challenged by more visitors partaking in high-impact activities that put great stress on natural resources (off road vehicles, shooting ranges, mountain bikes). The priority must be to focus on resource management, with accommodations for high-impact activities where the human imprint on the parks already exists. Consideration for future generations demands that present recreation uses of the parks must not reduce the capability of the parks to provide recreation in the future. In short, whenever possible, recreation should be non-consumptive, leaving the parks intact for the benefit of future generations of Marylanders. The Commission believes that to maximize the benefits of the parks for all Marylanders, present and future, resource protection simply has to be the highest priority.

**The State Parks Commission recommends the following:**

### **Recommendation 1.**

*Continue to favor resource management over recreation management.*

With the number and size of undisturbed areas shrinking in Maryland as a result of significant growth in development, the natural and historic resources within the state parks will become more precious. Efforts should be made to promote the notion of stewardship for the parks among the Maryland citizenry. The 1996 Department of Natural Resources Strategic Plan offers valuable insights into the fulfillment of a stewardship ethic. The plan calls for the State Forest and Park Service to demonstrate sound stewardship ethics and conservation practices on lands under its jurisdiction.

#### **Involve Children**

Enable every school age child in Maryland to visit one state park each year with the goal in mind to nurture a wise public land ethic.

#### **Encourage Responsible Behaviors**

Incorporate successful practices into interpretive programs that inform the public as well as all land management partners. Where current visitor overuse is impacting resources, interpretive efforts should be directed to informing the public and changing adverse behaviors through education.

*2 parks have  
restored forts*



## **1961-1967**

Spencer Ellis, a trained park professional, is appointed director of the Department.





*1 park has a stone arch bridge built in 1813, at the time it was the USA's largest*

### **Monitor Resources**

Implement resource inventory and monitoring programs for each park with significant natural or cultural resources in order to discover whether those resources are being adequately protected. Any plan that affects the ecological, biological, scenic, cultural and historical resources within the parks should be made available to, and reviewed by, the people of Maryland.

### **Increase visitor awareness**

Develop education programs for visitors that identify significant resources and promote appropriate behaviors toward those resources.

### **Incorporate Smart Growth into the Parks**

Empower and help communities revitalize and re-establish city and town centers in areas bordering or near state parks. Strongly encourage local governments to preserve and protect their ecological, biological, scenic, cultural and historical resources. Heritage preservation should be a top priority. Large-scale commercial development should never occur within a state park. Projects like marinas and golf courses should be left to private developers outside the boundaries of the state parks.

## **Recommendation 2.**

### *Capitalize on the educational power of the State Parks.*

Many Maryland residents use the education and interpretation programs in the state parks, but many more could be reached. Today, education experts are looking at environmental education programs as a promising tool for advancing scholastic achievement and building in students critical skills needed for the future workplace. Research demonstrates that students learning within an environment-based context show improved performance on standardized measures of reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. They develop higher-level critical thinking skills, exhibit less discipline problems and have an increased engagement in learning.

The SFPS offers a wide range of learning opportunities, but they are not aligned with school curriculums. The State of Maryland should find a way to establish a partnership between the Service and public schools. Students at every level should attain knowledge and understanding of Maryland's remarkable ecological, biological, historical, scenic and cultural heritage, whether in a park, or in a classroom.

Research shows that Americans are ill prepared to understand the complex and intractable environmental issues that will be our greatest challenges in the years ahead. Even though concern for the quality of the

## **1961-1967**

Staff of park planners begins design work for major capital development in state parks.



environment and its relationship to human health will likely increase in the early part of the next century, understanding the issues and doing something constructive about the problems may be more difficult than ever.

#### **Partner with the State Board of Education.**

Establish a partnership between state park educators and the State Board of Education to create a curriculum that could potentially be realized by annual visits to the state parks by teachers and students at every educational level. Partnerships should encompass colleges and universities as well. DNR properties should be used as laboratories for natural and cultural resource conservation and tourism curriculums.

#### **Conduct research of visitor needs to develop effective educational programs.**

Expand the education programs both in the parks and in community facilities so citizens of all ages will understand Maryland's remarkable ecological, biological, historical, and cultural heritage.

The appropriate agencies within the state and Service should:

- ✓ Conduct statistically valid visitor use and satisfaction surveys and use them to develop a coordinated strategy for education programs that includes access for multi-cultural groups, the disabled and non-traditional users.
- ✓ Comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure both park and program access to interpretation and visitor experiences.
- ✓ Conduct visitor use surveys and economic impact surveys at five years intervals.
- ✓ Develop and coordinate heritage tourism with MDOTD.
- ✓ Establish regional heritage information centers similar to Sideling Hill.
- ✓ Develop touring routes that highlight state public lands.
- ✓ Promote visitation on weekdays and off peak periods.
- ✓ Establish residential nature and environmental education centers and outdoor discovery camps in each region of the state.
- ✓ Continue to publicize the variety of programs offered in the parks, as in the Guide, but consider a streamlined publication for easier mailing.
- ✓ Formalize training of park volunteers
- ✓ Standardize the look of publications including maps and brochures to establish and identify agency brands (DNR and park logos and the Maryland State flag). Include a vision statement on all documents.

*6 parks are  
on the bay*



## **1969**

Maryland Outdoor Recreational Loan Act establishes a dedicated fund for acquisition of state and local park lands. - Program Open Space





*1 park has the  
longest waterfall in  
the state*

### **Recommendation 3.**

*Ensure that the SFPS has the necessary people, organization, systems, and tools to maximize the benefits of the State Parks.*

Currently, every State Park Manager is a law enforcement officer. This requirement effectively eliminates those who have focused on education and interpretation or other "civilian" specialization from exercising leadership in broader agency and policy arenas. The state parks system would benefit from a more balanced selection of Park managers. The State Forest and Park Service must recognize that its work force, in all types of jobs, is one of its greatest assets and the best means for protecting the resources of its public lands. The state parks system would benefit from a more balanced selection of park managers.

#### **Revise the organizational structure.**

Change the personnel classification system to reflect the diverse requirements of all park personnel. The workforce must include interpreters, resource managers, and other specialties. Several career paths must lead to the park manager job series.

#### **Establish employee competencies.**

Require interpreters and educators to become certified in their primary duties as are law enforcement officers. Implement training programs in education and interpretation for all state park employees so that there is universal understanding of the value and importance of this aspect of park operations.

#### **Reorganize headquarters staffing to focus on interpretation.**

Include interpretive and education program standards at the top level of Service personnel.

#### **Establish a funded partnership to implement interpretive programs.**

Fund the planning and development of interpretive media (maps, publications, museum exhibits, etc.) Interpretive media experts should oversee the program. The media should be obvious to the user as a Maryland state park publication, but be unique to each site's needs.

#### **Create additional permanent interpretive staffing.**

Support environmental education and cultural resource initiatives by adding interpretive staff members at the major parks.

**1969**

Governor Marvin Mandel creates the Department of Natural Resources which oversees forests and parks.



## **Recommendation 4.**

### *Expand and strengthen outreach programs.*

Recently the State Forest and Park Service has met with moderate success in reaching out to area businesses, local governments and community groups for financial and volunteer support.

### **Find and work with existing organizations.**

The Service should work with umbrella organizations of business leaders in Maryland such as the Maryland Chamber of Commerce the high technology councils and other appropriate organizations. Working with these organizations will allow the Service to partner with businesses and community organizations.

### **Establish advisory committees.**

Small businesses generally contribute to their communities with small donations, in-kind services and volunteer support and are more likely to contribute to an individual park. The Service should establish regional business advisory committees to facilitate the involvement of small businesses.

### **Increase involvement of State Park "Friends" and volunteer organizations.**

The volunteer component of the support of the parks has become extremely important. The Service must continuously improve relations with the statewide and local "Friends" and volunteer associations. The Service should make more use of State events such as the Maryland State Fair to recruit potential volunteers and involve volunteers in the design and execution of the annual "Friends" meetings. Outreach programs should be enhanced to include annual Service visits to the "Friends" organizations so that they can participate in State-wide initiatives as well as work on local projects.

### **Develop Initiatives to educate the legislature.**

Create a conduit through which continuous education about the benefits and emerging needs of the parks can flow to the general public, administration and the legislature. This could occur in the form of presentations to the Legislature, or through regular correspondence.

### **Establish a study for the potential of a center for the disabled and others with special needs.**

The center would seek to expose people with special needs to outdoor and environmental experiences. It would help to foster development of helpful products and services, as well as establish and promote a continuing dialog among therapeutic recreation specialists.

*1 park has the  
only designated  
scenic and  
wild river in  
Maryland*



## **1972**

Forests and Parks are made separate entities under DNR. Park acquisition and development accelerate under Capital Programs Administration.



*1 park houses an arboretum which displays trees, plants and shrubs of Maryland*



## **Recommendation 5.**

### *Market the State Parks*

The marketing of certain state parks and forests would have multiple economic, environmental and social benefits for Maryland's citizens and visitors. Three target markets have been identified for an advertising and public relations campaign:

- ✓ **Heritage Tourism,**
- ✓ **Nature Tourism, and**
- ✓ **Cultural Tourism.**

Whenever a marketing plan is designed, the capacity to satisfy the maximum potential response must be considered. The marketing plan must consider the risk of exacerbating the already existing overcrowding in several of our major parks. In addition to the goal of increasing tourism revenue by attracting the 25 - 50 age group, marketing must target underserved populations, culturally diverse populations, physically challenged populations, senior citizens, and young people. The general goal of the marketing plan must be to raise the awareness of the benefits of visiting Maryland state parks. A marketing team must oversee all materials generated for the Parks to ensure a consistent quality and look.

### **Create a significant marketing budget**

Finance the creation and distribution of print materials, radio and television ads, electronic media, and promotional displays that maximize the benefits of the state forests and parks by reaching the target audiences and attracting them to our parks.

### **Establish partnerships with:**

#### ✓ **Department of Economic and Business Development**

to ensure that the economic benefits of tourism are attained.

#### ✓ **Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts**

to promote tourism and use of state parks as sites for films and for Arts in the Parks Programs.

#### ✓ **Department of Education**

to develop ongoing educational programs and visitation by school children - pre-school through high school.

#### ✓ **Department of Transportation**

to develop and promote public transportation to state parks.

### **Establish a tourism public relations plan.**

Create a position that creates a strategy for press and public relations initiatives. Duties would include but not be limited to writing press releases and articles, coordinating tours for travel publications, broadcast media, state tourism organizations and outdoor recreation businesses and outfitters.



## Recommendation 6.

*Fund Maryland state parks consistently, fairly and in perpetuity*

The services at state parks are steadily declining, and in large part only the dedication of employees and volunteers have kept the State Forest and Park Service functional during the past ten years. The decline is to the point where sheer dedication can no longer overcome the obstacles created by lack of funding.

There is no longer adequate financial support to provide minimum levels of services within the state parks.

Basic needs are not being met. Patrols of natural areas are reduced due to the lack of adequate vehicles. Campgrounds are noisier; buildings are dirtier, and areas go unchecked.

At current wage levels, the SFPS can no longer attract quality seasonal employees. State parks no longer provide summer jobs programs to local youth or training for future full time staff.

The Commission asks the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly to provide **full funding** to meet the needs of the State Forest and Parks and to enable a dedicated revenue source to be developed to provide a **continuing funding** source for the parks. All employees, both full and part time, MES charges and vehicle replacement investments should be funded with General Funds. Other operational expenses should be funded with Special Funds.

Additional funding initiatives should also be explored. These strategies could include:

### **Create a Trust Fund.**

Create a trust fund with initial state support, which solicits private donations and endowments to enhance the state parks and forests of Maryland.

### **Add to the State Lottery.**

Explore a continuing "scratch off" type lottery item similar to the Stadium program. This could raise significant revenue at a low cost.

### **Create Revenue Generators.**

Sell state park merchandise. A revenue source is available through the merchandising of park logo's and paraphernalia. A private vendor should be selected to manage this program.

### **Revise Program Open Space.**

Create and support legislation that would increase the Program Open Space funds, from .05% to .06% of real-estate transfer fees to create a dedicated source of funding for the parks.



*1 park was the  
site of the largest  
Civil War  
prisoner-of-war  
camp*

## 1991

Cooperative forestry separated from Forests and Parks. State-owned forests remain in Forests and Parks, under Public Lands, within DNR.



*1 forest was part  
of the original  
donation of land  
for the present  
public land system*

### **Establish Matching Funds.**

Adopt a matching funds program similar to those which has proven to be successful for other states. Any outside group may donate to a program or capital item and the State will match those funds.

### **Revise the Special Fund Budget Formula**

Adopt a more business-like approach for forecasting upcoming budgets. Today the special fund budget is based on park revenues (entrance fees, rentals, etc.) as received in the year budgeted. Any number of intervening factors can dramatically affect this fund. The Commission recommends this budget be based on the previous year's actual revenue. A one-year special appropriation would be necessary to offset the absence of a year's Special Funds.

## **Recommendation 7.**

### *Establish a permanent State Parks Commission*

The Commission should report to the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources and should be charged to provide visionary advice and counsel. State parks must be thoughtfully planned and designed to harmonize with their settings, and preserve the natural, cultural and historical resources so precious to Marylanders present and future.





# THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL COMMISSION ON MARYLAND STATE PARKS

Governor Parris N. Glendening established a Special Commission on Maryland State Parks on April 22, 1999. The press announcement included the following:

The Governor established the Commission to examine ways to balance the need for natural resource conservation with cultural enrichment, as well as assess the fiscal well being of Maryland's park system. Formed in support of the Governor's proclamation of the Year 2000 as "the Year of Maryland State Parks," the Commission also will identify the primary and secondary benefits of parks and the proper balance of recreational use and resource management.

"**The Year of Maryland State Parks** will focus our energies and resources on our State's most beloved natural and historic areas," said Governor Glendening. "This Commission will complement the year-long celebration by recommending ways to improve our natural public areas, as well as promote and preserve our parks for the benefit of future generations of Marylanders."

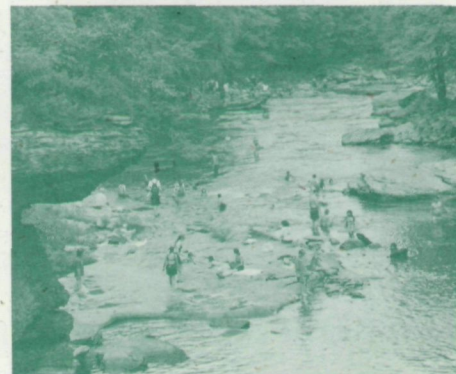
The Commission will lay a foundation for the future of Maryland's 47 state parks.

The Commission is composed of fifteen members from a wide variety of places within the State with a wide variety of backgrounds and interests. They come from business, government, education, and environmental organizations. The Chairman is Mr. Maurice H. (Herb) Schwartz, a resident of Silver Spring who has been involved in national, state, and local park affairs for more than forty years.

The Governor has provided two very closely related guiding statements for the work of the Commission:

- ✓ "To promote the future of Maryland state parks and maximize their benefits to citizens of all ages."
- ✓ "To ensure that we effectively preserve and promote our parks for the benefit of future generations of Marylanders."

*12 parks were built  
by the Civilian  
Conservation Corps  
during the Great  
Depression*





*1 park has  
40 of the  
2,050 miles of the  
Appalachian Trail*



The Governor charged the Commission to report on the following issues:

- ✓ The benefits of Maryland's state parks.
- ✓ The proper balance of recreation and resource management.
- ✓ Fiscal stability for the state park system.
- ✓ Additional business and community support.
- ✓ Marketing the parks.
- ✓ Strategies to maximize the benefits.

The Commission decided at its first meeting that it would accomplish its work through task forces consisting of members of the Commission with the help of DNR staff. Task forces were early established for each of the Governor's assigned specific duties.

The work of the Commission has been conducted in six overlapping phases:

- ✓ Learning, study, understanding the principles, facts, achievements, and problems.
- ✓ Creating ideas.
- ✓ Formulating recommendations of substance.
- ✓ Writing the draft report.
- ✓ Editing the draft.
- ✓ Designing the physical document.

Beginning with its meeting on April 26, 1999, the Commission has conducted fourteen monthly meetings, most recently on June 5, 2000. The Commission held five meetings in different regions of the state and in different kinds of places administered by the State Forest and Park Service, as follows:

**7 June**, Gambrill State Park (Western Region)

**12 July**, Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary (Southern Region)

**9 August**, Soldier's Delight Natural Environmental Area  
(Central Region)

**13 September**, Wye Island Natural Resource Management Area  
(Eastern Region)

**15 November**, Fort Frederick State Park (Western Region)



## **The Commission held the remaining nine meetings in Annapolis.**

The objective of meeting in the variety of locations was to help the members of the Commission get a representative sense of the sweep of the physical resources of the system. Each meeting included a working lunch at which a local staff person described the purposes and nature of the place at which the meeting was being conducted.

### **Subjects discussed at the meetings (other than the details of the work of the Commission) and the discussion leaders included:**

**An Historical Perspective** - Ross Kimmel, Manager of Historic and Cultural Resources, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

**The 1961 Commission** - Bob Beckett, Chief, Resource Planning, State Forest & Park Service (SFPS) DNR

**Current Status and Directions** - Rick Barton, Superintendent, SFPS

**Trends likely to have major influence on Md. State Parks in the Future** - Herb Schwartz, Chairman

**National Trends Considered at National Association of State Park Directors meeting** - Rick Barton, Superintendent, SFPS

**Breakthrough Thinking About Parks** - Herb Schwartz, Chairman

**Issues of Maryland's Public Lands with emphasis on Parks —**

Jim Dunmyer, Assistant Secretary for Public Lands, DNR

**The DNR Strategic Plan for Public Lands** - Gene Piotrowski, Director, Resource Planning, Land and Water Conservation Service, DNR

**Pictorial Views of Maryland's State Parks** - Ranger Daryl Anthony

**The Benefits of the Parks** - Herb Schwartz, Chairman

**Immediate vs. Long Term Perspectives for the Commission's work** Herb Schwartz, Chairman

**Program Open Space, Land and Water Conservation Funding, and Land Trusts** - Grant DeHart, Director, Program Open Space, DNR

**Financial Status - State Forest & Park Service** - Tom Haines, Assistant Superintendent, SFPS

**2000 - Year of State Parks** - Ranger Mark Maas

**Trends Influencing Maryland State Parks** - Herb Schwartz, Chairman

**The Governor's Smart Growth Program** - John Frece, Special Assistant to the Governor

**Management of Natural Resources** - Rusty Ruszin, Assistant Superintendent, SFPS and Carolyn Mathews, Naturalist, Western Region

**Management of Cultural/Historical Resources** - Ross Kimmel, Manager Historic and Cultural Resources

**Management of Law Enforcement** - Charles Hecker, Chief, Employee Services and Environmental Education

**Budget and Fiscal Processes and Issues** - Tom Haines, Assistant Superintendent, SFPS

**Marketing the Parks** - Gee Williams, Consultant to DNR

**Nature Tourism** - Rusty Ruszin, Assistant Superintendent, SFPS

**Conducting Public Communications** - Susan O'Brien, Media Representative, Public Communications Office, DNR

**2000 - The Year of State Parks** - Ranger Mark Maas

**Documenting Citizen Responses** - Helene Tenner, Chief, Public Involvement Programs, SFPS

**Special Opportunities for Disabled Persons** - Art Nierenberg, a distinguished leader of disabled persons' causes

**A Potential Battlefield State Park** - George Brigham, Chairman, South Mountain Task Force

**An Architect's Perspective of the State Park System** - Tom Gamper, Commission member



## Public Announcement

In December, 1999 the Special Commission and the Department of Natural Resources issued a press release seeking public comment about Maryland state parks and the issues which the Commission was addressing. Citizens were asked to comment on suggestions for fiscal stability of parks, marketing efforts, benefits of the state park system and the proper balance between recreation and conservation.

In addition to the press release being sent to the media it was distributed to the 25 Friends groups which support Maryland state parks, user groups, environmental groups and businesses such as outfitters whose businesses are associated with park use. The Commission was trying to provide as broad an opportunity for public participation in the Commission's work as possible. The Commission gave full consideration to the several suggestions received.

## Members of the Commission

**Maurice "Herb" Schwartz**, chairman, is currently a board member of the Friends of Maryland State Forests and Parks. He is a former trustee of the National Parks and Conservation Association, chairing its committees on park quality, public education, and park benefits. He was the founding president of a community park and recreation association.

**The Honorable John N. Bambacus**, Mayor of Frostburg, Md., and former State Senator from Allegany County.

**The Honorable Charlotte Cathell**, Ocean Pines. Mrs. Cathell was elected the Register of Wills for Worcester County in 1998. Prior to that, she worked for the MD Department of Natural Resources as the Easement Acquisition Coordinator for the Ocean City Beach Replenishment Project and the Eastern Regional Administrator for Program Open Space.

**Kayci Cook**, Assistant Superintendent, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, is formerly the Superintendent, Fort McHenry National Historical Shrine.

**Nancy Davis** is a founder and the current President of the Maryland League of Conservation Voters. She has been active in the Sierra Club on the local, state and national levels. Nancy is an artist, administrator of Sheepscot Little School of Art, and a practitioner at the Columbia Center for the Healing Arts.

**Senator Roy Dyson** has represented Charles, St. Mary's, and Calvert counties in the Senate since 1994. He is Senate Chairman of the Joint Committee on Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas. He also serves as a Lecturer on Government and Politics at Charles County Community College.

**Courtney Funn** of Largo, Md. Ms. Funn is a Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development.

**Thomas O. Gamper** of Baltimore, Md. Mr. Gamper is an architect, educator and avid fly fisherman. He is a former board member of Trout Unlimited and assisted with the design of the Morgan Run accessible fishing platform.

**Delegate Sue Hecht** has represented Frederick and Washington counties since 1995. She serves the Appropriations Committee as Vice Chair of Transportation/Environment. She has been an active member of many local and statewide commissions.

**Curtis King** of Elkton, Md. Mr. King is part of the corporate communications team at W.L. Gore and Associates.

**Thomas Koch** of Baltimore, Md. Mr. Koch is President of Curtis Engine & Equipment, a full service engine generator distributor. He presently serves as a member of the Maryland Port Commission, the Loyola College Board of Trustees, and the Architectural and Engineering Awards Commission.

**Kim Lamphier** of Rockville, Md. Ms. Lamphier is a member of the State Forest and Parks Service's "Friend of Scales and Tales" program. Scales and Tales is a State Forest and Park Service program which utilizes native Maryland wildlife to provide environmental education. Ms. Lamphier holds a master in policy science with a concentration in regulatory environmental policy from the University of Maryland.



**J. Matthew Neitzey**, Executive Director of the Maryland Conference and Visitor's Bureau, Inc. Mr. Neitzey also is a member of the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area Partnership, the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission Historic Sites Marketing Task Force and the Maryland Tourism Council.

**Wilson Parran** of Huntingtown, Md. Mr. Parran is a retired executive of Frontier Communications, former President of the Maryland State Board of Education, and is currently Chief of Information Technology, DNR.

**J. Mel Poole**, Superintendent, Catoctin Mountain Park, Maryland, represents the National Park Service. He formerly managed President's Park in Washington, D.C. In addition, he has been a Natural Resources Specialist and a Supervisory Park Ranger at parks in Maryland and the District of Columbia. He currently serves on the Tourism Council of Frederick County.

**Bill Sisler** of McHenry, Md. Mr. Sisler is the owner/operator of Bill's Marine at Deep Creek Lake and a member of the Deep Creek Lake Advisory and Review Committee for the past 15 years. He also served on the Garrett County Zoning Board.

**Ms. Helene Tenner**, Chief, Public Involvement Programs, State Forest and Park Service ably provided close logistical support of the Commission. Rusty Ruszin, Assistant Superintendent; Ross Kimmel, Manager, Historic and Cultural Resources; Tom Haines, Assistant Superintendent; and Rick Barton, Superintendent, State Forest and Park Service provided very helpful substantive contributions to the work of the Commission.

The Commission appreciates the graphic support provided by Peter Lampell, of the Public Communications Office, Department of Natural Resources.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After 14 months of diligent study and analysis, the Commission has focused on seven broadly based recommendations and a number of supporting strategies.

## Recommendation 1.

*Continue to favor resource management over recreation management.*

Consideration for future generations demands that present recreation uses of the parks must not reduce the capability of the parks to provide recreation in the future. In short, whenever possible, recreation should be non-consumptive, leaving the parks intact for the benefit of future generations of Marylanders. The Commission believes that to maximize the benefits of the parks for ALL MARYLANDERS, present and future, resource protection simply has to be the highest priority.

**Strategies include:**

- ✓ **Involve Children.**
- ✓ **Encourage Responsible Behaviors.**
- ✓ **Monitor Resources.**
- ✓ **Increase Visitor Awareness.**
- ✓ **Incorporate Smart Growth into the Parks.**

## Recommendation 2.

*Capitalize on the educational power of the State Parks.*

Many Maryland residents use the education and interpretation programs in the state parks, but many more could be reached. Research demonstrates that students learning within an environment-based context show improved performance on standardized measures of reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. They develop higher-level critical thinking skills, exhibit less discipline problems and have an increased engagement in learning.

**Strategies Include:**

- ✓ **Partner with the State Board of Education.**
- ✓ **Conduct research of visitor needs to develop effective educational programs.**  
Arrange for the conduct of statistically valid visitor use and satisfaction surveys.
- ✓ **Expand the education programs both in the parks and in community facilities.**

*1 park was selected  
by National  
Geographic Traveler  
as one of the  
USA's 50 best*





with 20071264

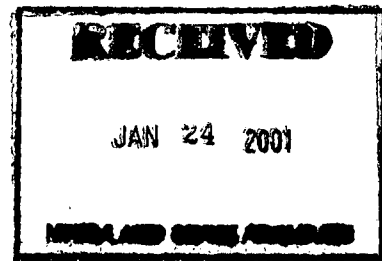
## THE GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL COMMISSION ON STATE PARKS

### MEMBERS

Maurice Schwartz, Chairman  
The Honorable John Bambacus  
The Honorable Charlotte Cathell  
Nancy Davis  
Senator Roy Dyson  
Courtney Funn  
Thomas Gamper  
Delegate Sue Hecht  
Curtis King  
Thomas Koch  
Kimberly Lamphier  
Matthew Neitzey  
Wilson Parran  
Mel Poole  
Bill Sisler

October, 2000

Governor Parris N. Glendening  
State House, State Circle,  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401



Dear Governor Glendening:

We are pleased to present the enclosed report of your  
Special Commission on Maryland's State Parks.

The members of the Commission are honored to have been given the opportunity to contribute to this wonderful project. I have been immensely pleased and impressed by their remarkable commitment and diligence during the entire process.

After very careful consideration, the Commission has developed seven recommendations. They are outlined in the enclosed report. The Commission members are certain that these measures will very substantially help to ensure that our state parks will be fully able to serve both Maryland's citizens and visitors, now and well into the future.

Above all else, our year of study has made one thing absolutely clear: Maryland's state parks are vital, distinctive characteristics of our State, its landscape and its people. Our state park system, as administered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, is a fundamental contributor to making our State the great state that it is. Just as the keystone of the arch is the wedge-shaped piece that holds the whole structure together, so the keystone of unspoiled Maryland is the system of state parks. The parks uniquely personify your many highly commendable actions to safeguard our remaining, dwindling, undeveloped lands.

The immediate stewards of our state parks -- managers, rangers, naturalists, historians and interpreters -- are especially appreciated, as are the thousands of volunteers who work each year to help maintain park facilities and provide invaluable services to visitors. They are the guardians -- and all of us are the beneficiaries -- of a remarkable system of state parks that has evolved into a widely diverse State-wide collection of beloved places. Those places are Maryland's legacy of ecological, biological, scenic, cultural, and historical resources:

- \*the ecological and biological features that sustain our native flora and fauna and support our wildlife;
- \*the scenic beauty that embodies the best of our natural heritages;
- \*the cultural features that continue to breathe life into Maryland's rich history; and
- \*the unique protected lands that support the core environmental objective of Smart Growth -- to save our most valuable remaining natural resources before they are forever lost.



Two key themes of your administration critical to Marylanders -- education and the environment -- come together powerfully in our state parks, where educational experiences can be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of formal education.

Here, people of all ages can experience first-hand our natural features and processes. We can:

- visualize geological time;
- wade in marine tidepools;
- run our fingers through the sand on the ocean's edge;
- hike from lowland wetlands to upland forests;
- follow scenic streams;
- camp in purple mountain majesty;
- view the breath-taking vista from atop the Boonsboro 1827 monument to George Washington;
- and watch eagles soar.

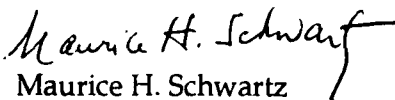
In our state parks, people of all ages can also gain great insights into our State's cultural and historical events and places. We are able to:

- stand on the island where Maryland's first colonists landed;
- sense the harrowing experiences of frontier women;
- visit the homes of leading colonists and revolutionary war patriots;
- drive for miles on the original national pike;
- contemplate battlegrounds once drenched in the patriotic gore of our forefathers;
- study the life of Benjamin Banneker;
- and walk the invisible tracks of the underground railroad.

Governor, because of their remarkable educational and environmental values, our state parks are certainly among the most precious foundations of the quality of life here in Maryland. Your guidance and foresight in bringing enhanced focus and leadership to our state parks -- exemplified by proclaiming 2000 The Year of State Parks, and providing special fiscal support through the generous Parks Improvement Program -- will, no doubt, enrich and invigorate the lives of Maryland's citizens and visitors throughout the 21st century.

We wholeheartedly support these efforts, and again, thank you for allowing us to be part of this extraordinary endeavor.

Sincerely,

  
Maurice H. Schwartz  
Chairman